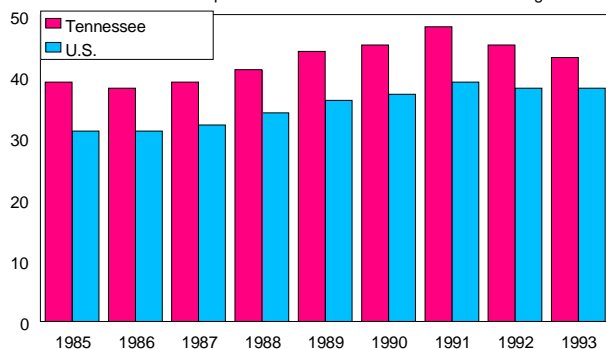


Teen Birth Rate, Ages 15-17 (Rate Per 1,000 Females)

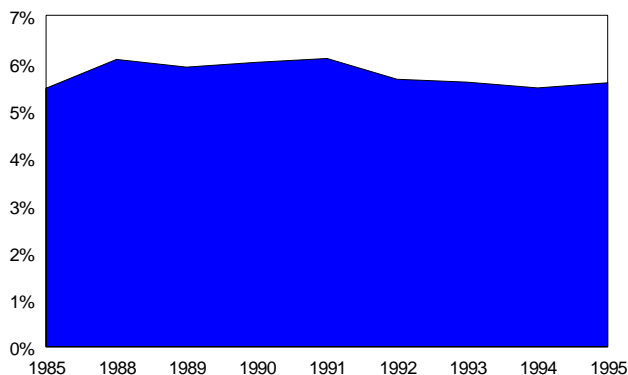
Nine-Year Comparison Between Tennessee and U.S. Average



Source: Casey Foundation, (1996). Kids Count Data Book: Profiles of Child Well-Being.

Tennessee Teen Pregnancy Rate

Percent of All Tennessee Girls, Ages 15-17



Source: Tennessee Department of Health

per 100,000 compared to 32.7 per 100,000 in 1995. Nationally, Tennessee ranks 35th on this indicator.

The national *Kids Count Data Book* compared Tennessee's rate with the national rate in 1985 and 1993. In 1985, Tennessee's rate was 41 per 100,000 compared to the national rate of 63 per 100,000. In 1993, Tennessee's rate was 32 per 100,000 compared to the national rate of 30 per 100,000.

The primary killer of Tennessee's children, aged 1 to 14, is accidents. Nearly half of them are motor vehicle accidents. The tragedy of these deaths is that many could have been prevented.

The best way to prevent child deaths is the use of child restraints and safety belts. Half of the children killed in motor vehicle accidents were not properly restrained, according to a 1995 report by the Tennessee Department of Safety. Children who are restrained in a car are 11 times more likely to survive a traffic crash than those who are not in a safety seat, according to the Tennessee Department of Safety.

TEEN PREGNANCY RATE

There are fewer teen pregnancies in Tennes-

see. In 1990, there were 6,360 girls aged 15-17 who were pregnant compared to 5,824 in 1995. The state's teen pregnancy rate improved 12% from 1990 (63.4 per 1,000 to 1995 (55.8 per 1,000). In 1995, 443 Tennessee girls ages 10 to 14 became pregnant.

For teen mothers, early prenatal care is essential to prevent complications. However, teens fail to get adequate prenatal care twice as often as the average woman giving birth, according to results of the 1994 Alan Guttmacher Institute publication entitled *Sex and America's Teenagers*. This lack of early prenatal care occurs across racial and ethnic groups.

Teens are more likely than older women to have babies whose health is compromised at birth due to inadequate prenatal care. Low birth weight is more common to infants of teens than among babies born to women in their 20s. Teens are also at higher risk of giving birth to a premature infant. Both low birth weight and prematurity are among the leading causes of infant mortality. Additionally, babies born to young mothers are more likely than those born to older mothers to have health problems during childhood and to be hospitalized, says the Guttmacher report.